

DETAILED ACTION

1. **This is a remailing of the office action of 8/4/2009. The office action is being reissued due to an error in the heading of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).**

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/19/09 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claim 37 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 37 is a means plus function claim. 112, sixth paragraph has been invoked per *In re Donaldson*.
5. Applicant has broadly invoked the terms client and network. "The network 120 typically includes hardware and/or software capable of enabling direct or indirect communications between the client 110 and content sources..." Specification, page 5, lines 15-17. "In one implementation, the client 110 includes one or more information retrieval software applications." Specification, page 4, lines 30-31. The instructions for

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execution on a client "may be embodied...temporarily in...[a] propagated signal that is capable of being delivered to the client." Specification, page 4, lines 22-25. "The controller 135B may be implemented by a software application." Specification, page 6, lines 19-27. Weighing the evidence, it appears that Applicant is attempting to claim a content access system in claim 37 that encompasses software *per se* without the presence of any physical hardware. This is not the case for independent claim 1 (method) or independent claim 19 (a system containing a client with a processor).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang et al. (US 7,133,368) in view of Kenner et al. (US 5,956,716).

8. In regard to claim 1, Zhang disclosed *a method of enabling a client to access content, the method comprising:*

receiving, on a client, an instruction from a client application indicating a client request to access content; Zhang allowed a Peer to receive a list of potential peers to access. The list is created by a server in column 8, lines 33-51. The request is in the login stage of column 8, line 19.

accessing, by the client application and on the client, a list of content sources capable of rendering the content for which access is requested by the client; Column 8, lines 52-54

determining, using the client application and based on requesting the identical portions of the content, a performance metric describing an ability for the content source to support the client as measured by the client between each of the at least two of the content sources; The performance metric is in column 8, lines 55-67, including latency. An additional hop-by-hop analysis can be performed in column 9, line 23.

comparing the performance metrics for the content sources; Column 9, lines 24-27.

selecting, using the client application on the client, among the content sources based on the comparison of the performance metrics for the content sources to identify a content source to be accessed by the client; and Column 9, lines 24-27.

rendering, using the client application on the client, the identical portion of the accessed content and a subsequent portion of content that follows the identical portion of the accessed content from the selected content source. Column 9, lines 24-27.

Establishing the game with the other peer.

Zhang disclosed establishing a connection for transmission of data between two sources. Zhang failed to disclose a method and system for switching to a backup source if congestion or node failure prevented maintaining the necessary level of throughput for a system.

Kenner disclosed a method of accessing video over a network. If a source of queried video data is unavailable, an alternate source is used to deliver the requested data. Kenner, column 16, line 62 – column 17, line 11. Priorities and latency are calculated for the various sources in column 25, lines 12-36.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to use the prioritized selection of a connection in Zhang with the alternate video source selection of Kenner in order to provide a user with the content requested at the necessary level of QoS while avoiding node congestion and failure as well as latency issues.

9. In regard to claim 2, Kenner disclosed *accessing the content source selected*. Kenner, column 16, line 61.

10. In regard to claim 3, Kenner disclosed *monitoring communications exchanged with the content source selected to determine a selected connection state to determine if an alternate content source should be accessed*. Kenner, column 16, line 62 – column 17, line 11

11. In regard to claim 4, Kenner disclosed *repeating the determining and selecting when the selected connection state indicates that the alternate content source should be accessed*. Kenner, column 16, line 62 – column 17, line 11

12. In regard to claim 5, Kenner disclosed *monitoring the state of at least one of the content sources not selected from within the list of content sources so that the alternate content source may be selected when the connection state indicates the alternate content source should be accessed*. Kenner, column 16, line 62 – column 17, line 11

13. In regard to claim 6, Zhang disclosed *receiving the list of content sources includes receiving the list of content sources from a host*. Zhang, column 8, line 50
14. In regard to claim 7, Zhang disclosed *the list of content sources is received in response to authenticating*. Zhang, column 8, line 19
15. In regard to claim 8, Zhang disclosed *determining the performance metric includes polling at least two of the content sources with a polling request*. Zhang, column 8, lines 33-51
16. In regard to claim 9, Zhang disclosed *polling at least two of the content sources includes transmitting a stream request to each of the content sources in the list of content sources*. Zhang, column 9, lines 9-25
17. In regard to claim 10, Zhang disclosed *determining the performance metric includes identifying a first content source with a response to the polling request that is received before other responses from other content sources included in the list of content sources*. Zhang, column 9, lines 9-25
18. In regard to claim 11, Kenner disclosed *determining the performance metric includes identifying a first content source able to sustain an identified throughput rate*. Kenner, column 25, line 17
19. In regard to claim 12, Kenner disclosed *identifying the first content source able to sustain the identified throughput rate includes identifying the first content source able to sustain the identified throughput rate for a specified duration*. Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

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20. In regard to claim 13, Kenner disclosed *determining the performance metric includes identifying the content source with a highest throughput rate*. Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

21. In regard to claim 14, Kenner disclosed *determining the performance metric includes ranking at least two of the content sources*. Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

22. In regard to claim 15, Kenner disclosed *using the ranking to select a backup content source to be accessed when the content source selected for access experiences an interrupt condition*. Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

23. In regard to claim 16, Kenner disclosed *maintaining a relative ranking among at least two of the content sources not selected by transmitting subsequent polling requests to the content sources not selected*. Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

24. In regard to claim 17, Kenner disclosed *establishing and maintaining a connection to one or more of the content sources not selected from among the list while accessing the content source selected*. Kenner, column 16, line 62 – column 17, line 11; Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

25. In regard to claim 18, Kenner disclosed *switching to one of the content sources not selected from the list when access to the content source selected is determined to be inferior to access available using the content source that is accessed*. Kenner, column 16, line 62 – column 17, line 11. Kenner, column 25, lines 13-37

26. Claim 19 is substantially the same as claim 1.

27. Claim 20 is substantially the same as claim 2.

28. Claim 21 is substantially the same as claim 3.

- 29. Claim 22 is substantially the same as claim 4.
- 30. Claim 23 is substantially the same as claim 5.
- 31. Claim 24 is substantially the same as claim 6.
- 32. Claim 25 is substantially the same as claim 7.
- 33. Claim 26 is substantially the same as claim 8.
- 34. Claim 27 is substantially the same as claim 9.
- 35. Claim 28 is substantially the same as claim 10.
- 36. Claim 29 is substantially the same as claim 11.
- 37. Claim 30 is substantially the same as claim 12.
- 38. Claim 31 is substantially the same as claim 13.
- 39. Claim 32 is substantially the same as claim 14.
- 40. Claim 33 is substantially the same as claim 15.
- 41. Claim 34 is substantially the same as claim 16.
- 42. Claim 35 is substantially the same as claim 17.
- 43. Claim 36 is substantially the same as claim 18.
- 44. Claim 37 is substantially the same as claim 1.

Conclusion

- 45. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- 46. Olson et al. US 5,987,376
- 47. Chapweske US 7,555,559
- 48. Feigenbaum US 6,339,785

49. Young US 6,477,522

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey R. Swearingen whose telephone number is (571)272-3921. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vivek Srivastava can be reached on 571-272-7304. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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